A Dreadful Account of a moſt

# Terrible Earthquake,

Which lately happened in

# I T A L Y,

Wherein Thirty Seven great Cities and Towns were totally Deſtroy'd, and One Hundred and Twenty Thouſand of Men, Women, and Children Periſhed, *&c.*

*In a Letter from the Conſul of* Meſſina's *Secretary.*

24. febr. 169 2/3.

*Loving Brother,*

THE Subject of my preſent Writing carries that Horrour and Amazement, as puts a Trembling into the very Hand that guides the Pen: The ſad Relation I have to make you, perhaps hath not hitherto been equalled in any Records or Hiſtory of the World, and I hope never will, the Calamity indeed being unexpreſſable. 'Tis true, we have had very melancholy Narratives of the late Diſmal *Earthquakes* in *Jamaica*; but, alaſs, that Viſitation has been infinitely Inferior to the much ſeverer Hand of Heaven felt amongſt us in this Part of the World. As to the *Earthquakes* that gave you ſome ſmall Fright in *England* and *Flanders*, thoſe were ſo inconſiderable, as to be ſcarce Shadows, little more than a Name.

For Inſtance, at a City call'd *Cattana* about 60 Miles from *Rome*, and not far from the Mount *Ætna*, on the firſt Inſtant there happened an *Earthquake* ſo Violent, that not one Houſe has been left ſtanding in the whole City, but, together with the Churches and Covents of *Fryers* and *Nuns*, all levelled to the Ground, and buried in one Heap of Rubbiſh, in which near 20 Thouſand People periſhed, there remaining not above 1500 Souls alive, and thoſe not all intirely Eſcaping, for above one third of the Number were either miſerably Torn and Mangled, or otherwiſe Hurt and Damaged.

The City *Seraguſa Anguſta* has participated in the like bitter Vial of God's Judgment, being in like manner intirely and utterly Deſtroyed, with an equal Fatality and Deſtruction of the miſerable Inhabitants, having only Five Hundred and odd People ſaved out of above 22000. A great many other Town and Villages have proportionably groaned under the ſame deſtroying Vengeance: Nay, the very Rocks throughout the whole Iſland have been all Torn in ſunder, and ſuch diſmal Marks are left behind, that the whole Face of the Country is little leſs than one continued Chaos and Confuſion. In fine, it is altogether ſo hideous a Scene, that no Words can expreſs nor Pen deſcribe it. To ſum up our general Miſery and Deſolation, the greateſt part of thoſe Remains of us, that God in his particular Mercy has been pleaſed to Spare, are forced to lie abroad out of the Towns and Cities (as no longer capable to ſhelter them) in Hutts and Booths ſomewhat like your *Bartholomew* Fair.

But in all theſe deplorable Objects before our Eyes, and the ſtill frightful Remembrance behind us, we have Reaſon to bleſs God that the leaſt Portion of this Miſery fell to our Share in this City *Meſſina*, compared with the more hideous Ruines and ſuffering Neighbours round about us; for we had that particular Providence to have only about 40 Houſes intirely deſtroyed, and about 30 People Killed, though indeed we have ſcarce a Houſe in the whole Town that has not in ſome Meaſure been Shattered and Torn.

After the Violence of our Conſternation was ſo far abated, as to give us leave to examine and compute the univerſal Loſs, we have had a Liſt of 37 Cities and Towns which have been wholly Ruined by this *Earthquake*, and above 120000 People periſh'd; beſides ſeveral Thouſands al Languiſhing, Maimed and Cripples.

But to quit ſo deplorable a Theme, and Return Thanks to Heaven for my own Preſervation, I ſhall conclude, by telling you, that God willing, I ſhall be very ſpeedily with you, this whole Iſland being now ſo ruined a Place, that I ſhall eſteem my ſelf Happy in my Deliverance from ſo Diſmal and Deſolate a Wilderneſs, *&c.*

*Meſſina, Jan.* 20.
169⅔. *In Italy.*

Your ever Loving Brother

W. B.

## POSTSCIPT.

*THis aboveſaid Account was ſent in a Letter, from the Secretary to* Mr. Thomas Chamberlin, *Conſul for Their Majeſties of Great* Britain *at* Meſſina. *And if any Perſon deſires any further Satisfaction, let him Repair to the Printer of this Relation, in whoſe Hands is the Original Letter.*

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